

The building industry is, of course, one of the most obvious of these, and, as pointed out in a later section of the report, the Board has provided for the trade training of ex-servicemen and others in such numbers as to enable the execution of the large-scale housing-construction plans which the Government has in mind.

Other industries, particularly those with a primary base, will provide ready employment for a considerable number of men and women, as well as supplies of consumption goods. In this regard, with a view to ascertaining their economic suitability for establishment or further expansion, investigations have been undertaken into the sugar-beet, industrial alcohol, wool tops, lucerne dehydration, linseed oil, electric motors, batteries, rubber tires, and hat hood manufacturing industries.

In addition, existing industries which offer opportunity for considerable expansion include woollen textiles manufacturing; leatherware, wood-pulp, paper, and cardboard manufacturing; tobacco growing and curing; linen and phormium flax growing and spinning; the manufacture of insulators and other clay products, and asbestos; fish and vegetable canning; and the making of gelatine and glue, moulded plastics, and sheep-dip. It is also expected that the engineering industry will play an important part in industrial reconstruction and will provide employment for the thousands of men who are at present gaining experience of this nature in the forces.

The provision of adequate suitable houses, furniture, and clothing is the prime prerequisite to successful rehabilitation, and added to this is the weighty responsibility of the Dominion to plan for economic security so as to provide a high standard of living for all her people, and thereby prove that the sacrifices of her sons have not been made in vain.

The Government has given an assurance that every ex-serviceman will be afforded ample time in which to settle down and become equipped to obtain the maximum benefit from the assistance extended to him. It is the wish of the Board that ex-servicemen, and the public also, will understand that it is the determination of the Government and of the Board that this assurance will be carried out.

Such are some of the observations thus far available from the investigations of the Board into the question of post-war reconstruction. These have all been based on the assumption of scientific post-war planning aimed at the maximum utilization of our resources in order to realize the greatest possible production of consumption goods. If to this assumption there is added the certainty that the working-out of the principles of the Atlantic Charter will follow victory, the Dominion is justified in looking forward to an era of expanding exports of primary produce and imports of necessary raw materials and manufactured commodities that cannot be manufactured economically in the Dominion.

On such a basis, given sane and equitable management, the enlarging prosperity of New Zealand cannot but make possible a new order for all her people, and especially for the men and women who have directly served in her defence.

(4) ADMINISTRATION

(i) DEPARTMENTAL ADMINISTRATION

Immediately following its inauguration the Rehabilitation Board gave consideration to means whereby the most efficient administration of all phases of rehabilitation work could be secured.

As was the case after the war of 1914-18, the main issue was whether every phase of work was to be amalgamated under a single Department specially created for the purpose, or whether different functions were to be performed by the different Departments concerned, acting as the agents of the Board.

One of the first acts of the Board was to confer with Permanent Heads of State Departments for the purpose of determining how the existing departmental machinery could be best harnessed in the sphere of rehabilitation.

After ascertaining the nature of the contributions that various Departments could make, the Board determined on an administrative set-up which would secure the advantages of inclusive departmental administration without loss of the advantages resulting from specialization of function by individual Departments. In other words, the Board desired to entrust the various Departments concerned with the work that they were peculiarly suited to perform, but, at the same time, it sought an administrative machinery which would co-ordinate these activities in a well devised and integrated policy evolved, and in the last resort administered, by the Board itself.

The Board proceeded to achieve this by the appointment of various Departments and organizations as its agents in particular defined fields, and also by the appointment of the Repatriation Division (henceforth to be known as the Rehabilitation Division) of the National Service Department as an administrative secretariat to the Board, charged with the co-ordination of all the activities of the various Departments and organizations.

The functions of the secretariat were defined by the Board as—

- “ (i) The transmission of policy decisions of the Board to the appropriate Departments and organizations.
- “ (ii) The co-ordination of various activities and supervision to ensure that the Board's policy as a whole was being applied by individual Departments and organizations to the end that the maximum overall efficiency in the administration of policy would be secured.
- “ (iii) The collection of information from the various sources for the maintenance of a complete Central Register of Assistance Afforded.
- “ (iv) The organization of information received from participating Departments and organizations and from outside sources for consideration by the Board in its formulation of policy.
- “ (v) General action to cause existing departmental and non-departmental organizations to become individual parts of a total machine, at once flexible and speedily responsive to the requirements of rehabilitation.”

Co-ordination of activities was further ensured by the creation of local Rehabilitation Committees, the Secretary in each case being the local Rehabilitation Officer.